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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/772,320	01/25/2001	Anoop Gupta	MS1-674US	7680

7590 07/30/2004

LEE & HAYES, PLLC
Suite 500
421 W. Riverside Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201

EXAMINER

CHOUDHURY, AZIZUL Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2143

DATE MAILED: 07/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/772,320

Applicant(s)

GUPTA ET AL.

Examiner

Azizul Choudhury

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 January 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-76 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-76 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 January 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/25/2001.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Detailed Action

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

- Claims 19 and 49-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The phrase "opportune time" is considered broad and fails to distinctly point out the timing advantage being claimed. More detailed language is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this

Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1-15, 18-21, 27-33 and 36-76 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Roberts, et al. ("Drop it in the Mail," Business 2.0 article, July 13, 2000), hereafter referred to as Roberts.

1. With regards to claims 1 and 47, Roberts teaches a method comprising: receiving an indication of a collaborative electronic mail message that includes a portion for feedback from one or more recipients; displaying an identifier of the collaborative electronic mail message for viewing by a user, and accepting commands, made available by an electronic mail program for manipulating other electronic mail messages, to manipulate the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that integrates email with instant messaging in one program (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). The user is informed of the message and is able to make a response as claimed (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

2. With regards to claims 2, 3, 4, 5, 28-30 and 48, Roberts teaches a method wherein the commands to manipulate the collaborative electronic mail message include reply, forward, delete and flag commands (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

3. With regards to claim 6, Roberts teaches a method wherein the indication comprises the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that allows for notification through email (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

4. With regards to claim 7, Roberts teaches a method wherein the identifier includes a subject of the collaborative electronic mail message and an author of

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the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

5. With regards to claim 8, Roberts teaches a method wherein the identifier includes a size of the collaborative electronic mail message, including all of the content of the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

6. With regards to claim 9, Roberts teaches a method wherein the collaborative electronic mail message further includes a graph of responses to the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design with means by which to allow for the viewing of a graph of responses as claimed (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

7. With regards to claim 10, Roberts teaches a method further comprising: receiving a user selection of a portion of the graph; and indicating which of a plurality of comments in the portion for feedback correspond to the selected portion of the graph (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for the viewing of a graph with up-to-the-moment tabulations (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). The recipients are allowed to not only place votes but, comments as well to the graph and hence the claimed feature exists within Roberts' design).

8. With regards to claim 11, Roberts teaches a method wherein the user selection comprises positioning of a cursor over the portion of the graph (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for the viewing of a graph with up-to-the-moment tabulations (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). The recipients are allowed to not only place votes but, comments as well to the graph and hence the claimed feature exists within Roberts' design. It is inherent that a mouse be usable to perform such tasks since a GUI is present in Roberts' design).

9. With regards to claim 12, Roberts teaches a method wherein the portion of the graph comprises a bar of a bar graph (Roberts' design allows for bar graphs (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

10. With regards to claim 13, Roberts teaches a method further comprising: receiving a user selection of a portion of the graph; and indicating which of the one or more recipients corresponds to the portion of the graph (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for the viewing of a graph with up-to-the-moment tabulations (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). The recipients are allowed to not only place votes but, comments as well to the graph and hence the claimed feature exists within Roberts' design).

11. With regards to claim 14, Roberts teaches a method wherein a recipient corresponds to the portion of the graph if the recipient's response to the

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collaborative electronic mail message is reflected in the portion (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for the viewing of a graph with up-to-the-moment tabulations (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). The recipients are allowed to not only place votes but, comments as well to the graph. This information is viewable and hence the claimed feature exists within Roberts' design).

12. With regards to claim 15, Roberts teaches a method wherein indicating which of the one or more recipients corresponds to the portion of the graph comprises displaying which of the one or more recipients corresponds to the portion in a box separate from the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for the viewing of a graph with up-to-the-moment tabulations (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). The recipients are allowed to not only place votes but, comments as well to the graph. The claimed feature is simply a key and since the comments and votes are viewable, it is inherent that the key is viewable as well).

13. With regards to claim 18, Roberts teaches a method further comprising: changing the identifier when the collaborative electronic mail message is opened by the user; receiving an indication that the collaborative electronic mail message has been modified; and changing the identifier again to visually indicate that the collaborative electronic mail message has been modified (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that changes to the Zaplets are posted in real time in a single

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page and hence, the identifiers are updated as claimed (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts)).

14. With regards to claim 19, Roberts teaches a method further comprising: waiting until an opportune time to display the identifier (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that is able to update posts in real time (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts)).

15. With regards to claim 20, further comprising: including, in the identifier, an indication of an author of the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

16. With regards to claims 21, 58, 70 and 76, Roberts teaches a one or more computer-readable memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform the method (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems and instant messaging systems (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). It is inherent that the claimed features (essentially a stored program) must exist within Roberts' disclosed design for it to function as disclosed).

17. With regards to claim 27, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a computer, cause the one or more processors to

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perform acts including: displaying a plurality of user-selectable options for control of electronic mail messages; allowing the plurality of user-selectable options to also control collaborative electronic mail messages (Robert's discloses a design that integrates email with instant messaging in one program (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). The claimed interface features inherently must be present since the design Roberts discloses requires user interface).

18. With regards to claim 31, Roberts' teaches one or more computer-readable media, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including accessing, during creation of a new collaborative electronic mail message, an electronic contact list to identify an electronic mail address for a recipient of the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed feature is known as an address book. Address books are inherently present in email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

19. With regards to claim 32, Roberts' teaches one or more computer-readable media, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: displaying a user-selectable reminder option; and sending, in response to selection of the reminder option, a reminder of a previously sent collaborative electronic mail message to one or more recipients of the previously sent collaborative electronic mail message.

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(Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that has notification means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

20. With regards to claim 33, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: displaying a user-selectable summary option; and in response to selection of the summary option, sending a summary, to one or more recipients of the previously sent collaborative electronic mail message, of responses received to a previously sent collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that displays all the messages in one clean, organized page (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts). This page is viewable by the recipients and the sender and is considered equivalent to the claimed summary option).

21. With regards to claim 36, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: identifying, to an author of a collaborative electronic mail message at the computer, how many recipients have not yet opened the collaborative electronic mail message; and identifying, to the author, how many recipients have responded to the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed feature for checking which recipient has not read messages sent to them is present in email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

22. With regards to claim 37, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media, further comprising identifying, to the author, how many recipients have opened but not responded to the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that allows for up to date information from all recipients, including graphs and comments (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts). Hence the means are present within the design disclosed by Roberts for the claimed feature).

23. With regards to claim 38, Roberts teaches A method comprising: displaying, in an electronic mailbox, an identifier of a collaborative electronic mail message; changing the identifier when the collaborative electronic mail message is opened by a user; receiving an indication that the collaborative electronic mail message has been modified; and changing the identifier again to visually indicate that the collaborative electronic mail message has been modified (Roberts discloses a design that allows for the combination of instant messaging and email (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). Notifications for messages are available (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, the messages are updated in real time (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts). Means are hence present for all the claimed features).

24. With regards to claim 39, Roberts teaches a method wherein the identifier includes a subject of the collaborative electronic mail message and an author of

the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses subjects and email addresses in the messages (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts). It is inherent to display this information on the message; especially the subject, the subject serves otherwise no other function).

25. With regards to claims 40 and 46, Roberts teaches a method wherein changing the identifier when the collaborative electronic mail message is opened by a user comprises changing the identifier from a boldface format to a non-boldface format (The claimed feature inherently is present in email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

26. With regards to claim 41, Roberts teaches a method wherein changing the identifier again comprises changing the identifier to a boldface format (The claimed feature inherently is present in email systems. Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that uses email systems (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

27. With regards to claim 42, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform the method (The design disclosed by Roberts' is a program that is stored and executed on a computing device as claimed).

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28. With regards to claim 43, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a computer, causes the one or more processors to perform acts including: displaying, in an electronic mailbox, a single identifier corresponding to a collaborative electronic mail message regardless of a number of replies to the collaborative electronic mail message that are received (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design that combines instant messaging with email (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). The messages have subjects and hence means for identifiers are present (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts)).

29. With regards to claim 44, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the single identifier includes one or more of: a collaborative electronic mail message icon, an author, a subject, and a timestamp (Roberts discloses a design that allows for subjects for messages (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, it allows for graphs (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts) and hence means for icons are present. Furthermore, since the messages are in real-time and a message is able to contain comments from a number of users (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts), it is inherent that means for timestamps are present).

30. With regards to claim 45, Roberts teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: changing how the single identifier is displayed based at least in part on whether the collaborative electronic mail

message has been opened and whether a modification to the collaborative electronic mail message has been received since opening the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' disclosure teaches a design with notification means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). Hence, means exist in the design disclosed by Roberts for the claimed features).

31. With regards to claims 49-63, Roberts teaches a method comprising: receiving an indication that a collaborative electronic mail message has been modified; and waiting until an opportune time to display a notification that the collaborative electronic mail message has been modified (Roberts' discloses a design with notification means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, the design allows for real time updates of the messages (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts). Furthermore, the messages are able to have subjects (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts) and comments (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts)).

32. With regards to claim 64, Roberts teaches a method comprising: receiving an indication of a collaborative electronic mail message; and displaying a notification of the collaborative electronic mail message, the notification identifying an author of the collaborative electronic mail message as a source of the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' teaches a design that combines email with instant messaging (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, the design features notification means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

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33. With regards to claim 65, Roberts teaches a method wherein the collaborative electronic mail message is a new collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for emails (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). It is inherent that means for creating a new message as claimed are present within the design disclosed by Roberts).

34. With regards to claim 66, Roberts teaches a method wherein the collaborative electronic mail message is a reply to a previously created collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for emails (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). It is inherent that means for creating a reply message as claimed are present within the design disclosed by Roberts).

35. With regards to claim 67, Roberts teaches a method further comprising displaying, as the notification, a subject of the collaborative electronic mail message and a size of the collaborative electronic mail message, wherein the size of the collaborative electronic mail message includes all of the content of the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for emails (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). It allows for subjects (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts) and has notification means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, it is inherent that the size feature is present since it is commonly available in email systems).

36. With regards to claim 68, Roberts teaches a method wherein the indication comprises an identifier of the author, a subject of the collaborative electronic mail message and a size of the collaborative electronic mail message, wherein the size of the collaborative electronic mail message includes all of the content of the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for emails (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). It allows for subjects and email addresses (p. 1, 5th paragraph, Roberts) and has notification (equivalent to indication) means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts). In addition, it is inherent that the size feature is present since it is commonly available in email systems).

37. With regards to claim 69, Roberts teaches a method wherein the indicator comprises the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that allows for emails (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). The design has notification (equivalent to indicator) means (p. 1, 6th paragraph, Roberts)).

38. With regards to claims 71-75, Roberts teaches a method comprising: identifying, to an author of a collaborative electronic mail message, how many recipients have not yet opened the collaborative electronic mail message; and identifying, to the author, how many recipients have responded to the collaborative electronic mail message (Roberts' discloses a design that combines email with instant messaging (p. 2, 7th paragraph, Roberts). The design allows for real time messages (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts). In addition, the design allows for graphs and comments from all the participants (p. 1, 6th paragraph,

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Roberts). This is equivalent to the claimed recipient response features claimed. Furthermore, Roberts' disclosed design allows for messages to be viewed hence means by which to view messages, whether by a button or a dialogue box, are present in the design. This is further supported by the fact that all the messages are viewable through a single page (p. 2, 1st paragraph, Roberts)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Conmy et al (US Pat No: US006101480A), hereafter referred to as Conmy.

39. With regards to claim 22, Conmy teaches a system comprising: a calendar component that maintains a record of appointments scheduled for a user; and an electronic mail component, communicatively coupled to the calendar component, that presents both collaborative electronic mail messages and other electronic mail messages to a user, and that also identifies conflicts between appointments identified in the collaborative electronic mail messages and the appointments scheduled for the user (Conmy's design that performs

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electronic calendar functions and scheduling tasks (column 1, lines 48-53, Conmy). The design is intended for use with email systems (column 10, lines 33-38, Conmy). In addition, Conmy's design features meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy)).

40. With regards to claim 23, Conmy teaches a system wherein the collaborative electronic mail messages include a new collaborative electronic mail message being authored at the system (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Conmy's design is intended for use with an email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy)).

41. With regards to claim 24, Conmy teaches a system wherein the collaborative electronic mail messages include a collaborative electronic mail message received from another system (The claimed features are inherent features within email systems. Conmy's design is intended for use with an email system (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy)).

42. With regards to claim 25, Conmy teaches a system further comprising: a task manager component, communicatively coupled to the electronic mail component, that maintains an electronic task list; and wherein the electronic mail component further identifies conflicts between appointments identified in the collaborative electronic mail message and tasks in the electronic task list

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(Conmy's design includes an electronic task list as claimed (column 11, lines 30-50, Conmy)).

43. With regards to claim 26, Conmy teaches a system further comprising: a contact manager component, communicatively coupled to the electronic mail component, that maintains a set of electronic mail addresses; and wherein the electronic mail component further accesses the set of electronic mail addresses to identify electronic mail addresses of recipients identified by the user (Conmy's design uses an address book (column 1, lines 59-65, Conmy) and uses a database to store user profiles (column 2, lines 33-50, Conmy)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 16, 17, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roberts in view of Conmy et al (US Pat No: US006101480A), hereafter referred to as Conmy.

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44. With regards to claim 16, Roberts teaches through Conmy, a method further comprising: comparing a time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message with an electronic calendar corresponding to the user; determining whether a conflict exists between the time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message and a pre-existing commitment in the electronic calendar; and if a conflict exists, then displaying an indication of the conflict

(Roberts discloses a design that combines instant messaging with email (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). While Roberts' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Roberts' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Roberts with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

45. With regards to claim 17, Roberts teaches through Conmy, a method further comprising: comparing a time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message with an electronic task list corresponding to the user; determining

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whether a conflict exists between the time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message and a pre-existing task in the electronic task list; and if a conflict exists, then displaying an indication of the conflict

(Roberts discloses a design that combines instant messaging with email (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). While Roberts' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Roberts' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Roberts with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

46. With regards to claim 34, Roberts teaches through Conmy, one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: accessing an electronic calendar maintained by a task manager component; and identifying conflicts between times included in the collaborative electronic mail messages and commitments in the electronic calendar

(Roberts discloses a design that combines instant messaging with email (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). While Roberts' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Roberts' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Roberts with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

47. With regards to claim 35, Roberts teaches through Conmy, one or more computer-readable media wherein the identifying comprises identifying conflicts between commitments in the electronic calendar and collaborative electronic mail messages being authored at the computer as well as collaborative electronic mail messages received at the computer

(Roberts discloses a design that combines instant messaging with email (p. 1, 4th paragraph, Roberts). While Roberts' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Roberts' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Roberts with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

Remarks

After careful review of the application, the examiner failed to note any truly unique traits within the design claimed. The claims provided are seen as being general and would benefit from the inclusion of more detailed specifications. In addition, should the applicants have any further details regarding their design that would present their design as being truly unique over the prior art provided by the examiner, they are encouraged to amend the specifications and claims to reflect such changes.

In addition, the prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The patent application: US006463461B1, is the patent application filed by the Zaplet company for the Zaplet program

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disclosed by Roberts above. Should the applicant feel that the disclosure provided by Roberts be insufficient to reject the claims provided, the applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Zaplet prior art since both the Zaplet prior art and the Roberts disclosure are detailing the same design.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Azizul Choudhury whose telephone number is 703-305-7209. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on 703-308-5221. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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DAVID WILEY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100